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[P. 464-B] Teklum

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Thus I fare well. I have not been killed, nor have I been sick.

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A good man is of one heart, and he shows it by his humility. *ben k'un yo?tan* or "very soft heart." He can drink with friends on either side of the dual division of the town, and he is called upon in many household fiestas to greet the guests of the house-owner.

But the man who is "very strong of heart," *ben toyol yo?tan*, who "fails to take people into account," *ma ?awa ta kwenta*, who "abuses people," *me ya wut*, has means of survival despite the many threats to his life. He surrounds himself with a circle of *compadres*, or godparents; he especially picks out curers, both to mitigate the use of their power against him, and for them to serve as intermediaries if he should have enemies with animal spirits. When a threat becomes imminent, he may stay within his house or limit his range of activities to a very circumscribed area, always taking a weapon when he does go out. He will usually try to limit his drinking, or give it up entirely. These short-range rules of avoidance are clearly indicated by the circumstances in which killings occur: in the hills or at night, when the victim is under the influence of liquor.

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[756]
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These 37 cases of homicide reveal a regularity in the kinds of people and situations involved. The victims are most often men who assert power, principally curers, or men who violate standards of behavior by abusiveness or theft. Their killers are often linked to them by kinship or neighborhood, the bonds in which tensions are greatest. The regularity of time and place of homicide suggests the precautions that can be taken to avoid being killed if one has an enemy. The general failure of the community social-control agents to bring negative sanctions against a killer indicates that homicide is an accepted solution for interpersonal conflict. The structural setting that validates this behavior is discussed below.

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II. STRUCTURAL CHANGE AND SOCIAL CONTROL

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Case analysis, useful for discerning certain patterns, is inadequate for understanding the interrelationships among a variety of social changes in the community. An increasing rate of homicide of this magnitude indicates fundamental changes in the social matrix in which individual decisions are made: it suggests not

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sion: "I pay respect to my elders. I greet my brothers and my children [extension of kinship terms]. To all I give respect. Thus I fare well. I have not been killed, nor have I been sick."

A good man is a generous host, expressed in the phrase, "he gives many tortillas." He serves his community in public office but avoids the appearance of seeking power or self-aggrandizement. When he gives orders, it is in a soft, low tone, supplicating rather than ordering with the phrase, "If you would please lend a hand." He gives thanks readily for any service rendered both to God and to his fellow man. He avoids any show of anger, and is always careful to show consideration of others. Those who are of "another heart" or "two-hearted" are the opposite, seeking disputes, "thinking small," "being miserly," and of a "very black soul."

The heightened awareness of the state of the heart of others comes from the ever-present fear of witchcraft. Since the people feel their survival depends upon perception of evil heart before it strikes, they develop an acute sense of the behavioral clues that indicate its presence.

Conformity and deviance. Conventional or preferred behavior is characterized as "reasonable." The phrase "*?ič' rason*," to take reason or understanding, is applied to a child who is expected to have reason at the age of twelve years or so, as well as to the arrival at agreement of competing parties, as in the case of betrothal.

Reasonable behavior is any behavior conforming to socially accepted understandings of what the world is. These include what a person of non-Indian culture might characterize as beliefs based on faith. They "know" that there are hill spirits, wood spirits who cut off people's heads, and men who transform themselves into animals. Occasionally they subject given understandings to empirical tests: one woman tested the belief that a woman could rid the milpa of insect pests only by walking through a planted field wearing a new skirt; she walked through the field wearing a worn skirt and her belief was confirmed when she found that the insect pests were not killed but just fled and returned later. Empiricism is not lacking; the difference between the content of their category of what is rational or reasonable and ours is based on the premises, not the process of reasoning.

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People who fail to conform to the customs of the town are said to lack "reason." This category includes those who do not attend to the advice of their elders. People from outside of town who do not behave in conventional patterns are said to be "of another sort."

Institutionalized patterns of behavior differ as to the degree of explicitness of the association between action and reason. Curing practices are most directly attached to an understanding of why they are performed. Ritual practices in the cult of the spirits are tied to a more general explanatory system in which something should be done "because it was the custom of our ancestors."

Competency. Judgments concerning the intelligence of a person and his ability to adjust to his social and physical environment complement the criteria of morality and reasonableness. Alertness, or intelligence is associated with the possession of more than one soul: a person may have from one to a dozen additional souls. Curers and witches, by virtue of their possession of an animal spirit, are by definition very intelligent. Evaluations of alertness are often made in discussing the personalities of others. In the myth concerning the three brothers and the honey (Chapter 8) God, the Elder Brother, was described as "not very bright," Jesus Christ, the Second Brother, as "a little brighter," and the Holy Ghost, the Youngest Brother as "the brightest." Alertness is usually associated with manipulation for one's own advantage, but is not necessarily antithetical to having a good heart. In the myth mentioned above, the youngest brother outwits his two older brothers to his own advantage, and coincidentally that of the world.

The word *b'ol* is used figuratively to express the opposite of alertness, stupidity. Literally it means one who is mute; the connection is significant. A child born mute is said to have had its soul stolen at birth so that he must exist without speech. The power of speech is highly valued and the prestigeful roles are accorded to those who can speak well in both formal and informal exchanges. It is a dangerous skill, since the ability to talk to the gods gives an advantage to the speaker over the general population. The ability to speak to the earth, a talent which people say the ancestors possessed and which curers in the neighboring town of Chamula still

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787 claim, has been lost, as has been more recently that of speaking with the ancestors. But the curers can still enter into communication with the spirit world and in this lies their power.

461
183 Industry is valued along with competency. A man is described as industrious with the words, "he carries much wood well," and a woman with the words, "she carries much sand well." These expressions are a kind of
[196] synechdoche for general industriousness, since the tasks serve as the measure of willingness to perform one's sexually defined roles.

[476]
[602] Judgments made in the choice of working "partners" in the exchange labor system are based on competence in working as well as on considera-
[608] tions of kin and compadrazgo relationship. Women make judgments of
[323] others' skill in pottery-making on the basis of both the appearance of the pot and its durability proved in use and transportation without breakage to market. Both men and women known to be hard workers are admired
[154] and envied. They may consequently become the objects of witchcraft.

828
157 Conceptions of personality are one end product of evaluations of performances and condition people's expectations of individuals in their social environment. For the Indians, personality traits tend to imply other traits.
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157 In order to derive a sense of these implications for Tzo'ontahal, I drew up
828 a checklist to identify some of these associations. Informants were asked to state whether each of the traits listed on the top line in Table 30 was correlated positively, negatively, or not at all with each of the same traits listed vertically. A plus (+) sign indicates positive correlation, a minus (—) sign indicates negative correlation, and an equal (=) sign indicates that
157 there was no correlation. Thus being bright is positively correlated with
828 being beautiful and negatively correlated with being evil, fearful, lazy, foolish, gullible, braggardly, gossipy, and miserly. There is no connection between being bright and being of good heart, aggressive, or honorable. This suggests that the heart and the mind are independent loci for a set of traits that stem from them. Metaphors such as bitter, acid, and straight, when used to describe personality, are similar in connotation to those used in English. As in English, immediate sensory experiences of taste and vision provide by extension a means of talking about character.

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551 In studying these personality traits, I sensed that "being" was "doing" things in certain repetitive ways. This impression is corroborated by the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 286]

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TABLE 30. Personality Traits and Their Implications *

	Bright	*Beautiful*	*Good heart*	*Soft heart*	*Aggressive*	*Evil*	*Industrious*	*Fearful*	*Lazy*	*Foolish*	*Gullible*	*Gossipy*	*Miserly*	*Upright*	*Braggardly*
Bright		+	=	=	−	−	=	−	−	−	−	=	−	=	−
Beautiful	+		=	=	−	−	=	=	−	−	=	−	−	=	−
Good heart	=	+		+	−	−	=	=	−	−	−	−	−	+	−
Soft heart	=	=	+		−	−	=	=	−	−	−	−	−	+	−
Aggressive	=	=	=	−		+	=	−	+	=	=	−	=	−	=
Evil	−	−	−	−	+		=	−	−	−	−	=	+	−	=
Industrious	=	=	=	=	=	=		=	−	−	=	=	=	=	=
Fearful	−	=	=	=	−	−	=		=	=	=	=	=	=	+
Lazy	−	−	−	−	=	=	−	=		=	=	−	−	−	−
Foolish	−	−	−	−	=	=	−	=	−		−	−	−	−	−
Gullible	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	=	=	−		+	+	−	=
Gossipy	−	−	−	−	=	+	−	−	=	=	+		+	−	+
Miserly	−	−	−	−	=	+	=	=	−	−	+	+		−	+
Upright	=	=	+	+	−	−	=	=	−	−	−	−	−		−
Braggardly	=	−	−	−	=	=	−	−	=	=	=	+	+	−	

* Response of one informant.
+ Positive corelation
= No corelation
− Negative corelation

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old and do not have as much opportunity to project their personalities in larger than life terms. Ladinas of the neighboring towns are given nicknames: Me? Sobol for example, was named for her habit of saying when she was drunk, "No soy bola" (I am not drunk); Me? C'ič'el, meaning Mother Blood, was applied to a woman who sold blood of slaughtered animals.

Behavior is not believed to be totally dependent on innate traits, and the Indians emphasize the socialization processes. A badly behaved youth was said in court to "behave as though he did not have a mother," and to lack fear of his parents. The sense of shame and fear begin at home, and the community relies on the family to instill these controlling influences on behavior.

Notions of Justice and Compensation

Notions of immanent justice, whether acquired from the priest or indigenous beliefs, are peripheral to the morality system. Crimes should be paid for not in suffering, guilt, or remorse, but in fines exacted by the communal authority. Every crime has its price, and most people agree that it is good to be able to pay in money and be exonerated. The scale of values assigned in the fines for crimes is some index to the relative weight given them:

Stealing a bull: 500 to 1,200 pesos, depending on value of bull.
Stealing a turkey: 40 to 70 pesos, depending on value of turkey.
Stealing a horse: 300 to 500 pesos, depending on value of horse.

The range of fines for each act of theft indicates that justice is exacted on the basis of market value of the item stolen. The fine for murder is 1,600 to 3,000 pesos or two to eight years in prison when a killer is captured by the federal authorities. Local authorities rarely try to find the killer. In the thirty-seven cases of homicide analyzed in the period from 1938 to 1965 (Table 29), only two resulted in federal action.

People express doubt about the priest's warning that those who do evil will reap the wages of sin in this life or the next regardless of whether they are found guilty. The pragmatic basis for this conclusion is revealed

1 (see pp.245-247..Analyst)

554 these role-bearers have other functions to perform, but the term specifies the most significant of these. Other people may unofficially perform these acts but only the officially appointed person has the other prerequisites for and duties of the role.

3. Recruitment into roles depends on age and sex qualifications. Validation of the role emphasizes, in addition to these ascribed characteristics, innate capacity rather than acquired ability. For example, the curers who are respected are assumed to have been born with an animal spirit, while those who are believed to have acquired it are suspected of being witches. Similarly, high civil officials are expected to be innately clever, not just trained for office.

828 4. Evaluation of performance emphasizes the state of the heart and qualifies judgments of the person according to characteristics of the mind and of the soul. The heart governs emotions such as contentment or inner turmoil and determines the moral relations a person has with others. The mind enables a man to deal effectively in his instrumental activities so that he can speak and work well. Possession of a [774] second soul means that one is clever and capable, but it is the third soul which gives power over the life and death of others. The exchange of [754] evaluations about others is a crucial area of concern in the tense atmosphere dominated by fear of whichcraft. In the belief that their very sur- [56] vival depends upon knowledge of the intent of others before it is expressed in witchcraft, the people constantly consult with relatives, compadres, neighbors, or the curers, in order to anticipate changes in their relations with others.

681 5. Sanctions against behavior that fails to meet role expectations depend on the seriousness of the crime rather than on the attitude of the criminal. This means that compensation relieves the wrong-doer of any guilt burden. Most compensation, even for homicide, can be translated into cash payment.

156 6. Ceremonial behavior in everyday interaction as well as in [554] ritual serves to limit the personal involvement in the encounter and to emphasize the role category. This is particularly emphasized in the [273] initial stage of the encounter. Liquor and cigarettes introduce a more [276] informal behavior in which the etiquette of reserve can be relaxed.

178 it is still functioning in the context of the witchcraft conflict.
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754 So, although the fact that the Alferez has disappeared as a post
[177] can be taken as a sign of acculturation, it is also a reflection of differential adjustment to internal conflict.

000 Witchcraft itself is a complex phenomenon. It reflects the economic domain, in the sense that witchcraft accusations are important sanctions applied to people who try to deviate from the economic standards of the community. It reflects the kinship domain, insofar as relational roles existing within the kinship frame, in which conflict is likely to occur, are likely targets for witchcraft talk and mutual accusations. It is a territorial domain phenomenon because spatial relations between people affect their social relations and the appearance of conflict: it is common, we have mentioned, that people living on the edges of town tend to be accused of witchcraft more often, and neighbors of the household are expected to be more prone to bewitch household members than people living further away. Finally, it is a psychological phenomenon, insofar as it reflects individual personalities and/or mental distress. Some people show extreme fear of it, and some people doubt its existence (there are agnostics in every society). Some curers, who are individuals with very unstable personalities, are even willing to denounce themselves as witches with the purpose of having others fear them or respect them.
[754] People whom we, in our culture, would consider mentally ill, are
[828] classified as witches in Aguacatenango and Amatenango.

On the one hand, it can be said that witchcraft is a residual category for the explanation of otherwise unexplainable